

CALLING ON AMERICANS TO ENSURE THEY ARE HEARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am moved to wish all of the mothers of America a happy Mother's Day. Just a few hours ago, I stood with mothers from this community acknowledging the very special challenges that mothers have, particularly unemployed mothers in supporting their families, nurturing sons and daughters who cannot find employment. I encourage them to have their voices heard. In fact, I challenged the mothers of America, particularly the large numbers of mothers who face economic troubles and challenges every day, to have a mothers' march so that their voices can be heard; a mothers' march that will march on Washington to ask the hard questions about health care, education, Medicare and Medicaid, the kinds of issues that my friends on the other side of the aisle make light of, throw it to the wind, call it the poor people's issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take issue with some of the good words of my friends from the other side of the aisle. I will show my colleagues the headline in USA Today that says, "Support for the Bush tax cut is growing." I have an answer to that, Mr. Speaker. Every Sunday morning, before millions of Americans go off to church, the owned and paid-for national television programs time after time show the same droning voice, one side of the issue, how great a \$550 billion tax cut is. If our airwaves, that are supposed to be protected by the first amendment, do not allow the opposition perspective to even be heard, then what would we expect from the American people? What would we expect but for the polling to go from 42 percent to 52 percent. Shame on America's media. They only showed one side of the war, and now they are only going to show one side of the domestic tax debate.

Our good friends in this House followed suit. Never in the history of this body, the body that is supposed to be responsible for the purse strings of America, and debated on the floor of the House a lousy 1 hour when, in the times of the Democratic control, hours of debate, days of debate were given to the opposition to express their viewpoint. But yet we were denied both a motion to recommit and a substitute. What do you expect from the American people?

But let me tell the American people, those of them who claim to be interested in this government: you can lay back and let the polls speak for you if you desire to do so. You can say Democrats cannot be heard. But you look at this picture in The Washington Post and see the throngs of Iraqis, the bills that are going to be mounting; and yet my colleagues are arguing for a \$550 billion tax cut that is going to do nothing for the people of this Nation.

In fact, just my district, as an example, those individuals, the average tax cut for the top 2 percent of taxpayers in the 18th congressional district, a somewhat similar district to American districts around the country, those making the top 2 percent, they will get \$13,000. But the average tax cut for the lower 56 percent of the taxpayers in the 18th congressional district will be a lousy \$136.

The Democratic job plan sings a different tune, but we cannot get the airing or the hearing before the American public. We believe in tax cuts for working families, increasing the child tax credit, expansion of the 10 percent bracket, eliminating the marriage penalty. We believe in allowing small businesses to expense up to \$75,000, bonused appreciation. We understand that small businesses are the backbone of America. And for those of you looking for jobs and are frustrated, deflated, and frightened, we understand the compassion that is needed for you to be able to support your families; but our Republican friends did not extend your unemployment benefits.

We know the crises that are going on in families today, the very tough decisions that have to be made about food or pay the rent, but our Republican friends are not interested. We give broader coverage for those who are unemployed. We give money back to the States. How many of you come from States where they are grappling with a budget deficit and they cannot afford to pay teachers or child care providers? We understand that in providing health care, education, and homeland security and infrastructure.

Might I suggest to my colleagues that it is a mockery to think that this \$550 billion joke is going to create jobs. The President's plan is \$550 billion. He alleges that it will create 1 million jobs. That means we are paying \$550,000 per job. Two jobs, two jobs, it takes.

So all I can say to the American public and to my colleagues in this House, when the Republicans are in charge, this chart shows us that we lose jobs. When the Democrats were in charge, including President Clinton, we voted in 1993 to surge the economy and in 1997 to surge the economy, and we did that. And the 1990s were one of the most prosperous decades in the history of this Nation. It is a shame on America, a shame on the media for you to allow yourselves to be so duped. I hope you understand. If you do not stand up and speak for yourself, you will be run over.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentlewoman from California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

REPUBLICAN TAX CUTS MEAN RECKLESS FISCAL COURSE FOR AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, in less than 1 hour's time, this House of Representatives set our Nation on a very reckless economic course. We are here today in a time of great national challenge. Overseas we face the large challenge of rebuilding Iraq and trying to establish a democratic form of government in that country of about 23 million people. The President recently asked for, and the Congress appropriated, about \$80 billion for our efforts in Iraq.

But while we are engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere, we must not forget the very real needs right at home. Because while we build new schools and new hospitals in Iraq and we work to get the Iraqi economy moving again, this administration has been very much out of touch with our needs right here at home and with getting our economy moving again right here in America.

Since the Bush administration came to office, we have lost 2.7 million jobs in this country. Gone, vanished. Half a million of those jobs were lost in the last 3 months alone. And today, 8.8 million Americans are unemployed.

We need an economic plan that will put America back to work and a plan that will reflect the values and the priorities of the American people. The Republican tax package that was adopted earlier today does not. It will not stimulate the economy, it will only stimulate red ink in the years to come, and it does not reflect the priorities of the American family; it reflects the priorities of a very few at the expense of our national interests.

In fact, the message of the Republican tax cut today was loud and clear: forget about the people who are out of work. Forget about the long-term fiscal health of our country. Their number one domestic priority, number one, the most pressing need in America today, according to the package and message they sent, is that the very wealthiest in our country, the people at the very top of the ladder are being taxed too much and we need to give

them a big tax cut in the form of capital gains tax cuts and a removal of the tax on stock dividends.

I can tell my colleagues, and I think we all know, that the troops who sacrificed so bravely, most of them are not waiting for their big stock dividends in the mail. But our troops, their children, and all Americans will be paying for this in the long run, because this tax cut is going to exacerbate the fiscal problems in this country. We have already had the biggest reversal in American history, from a \$5.6 trillion projected surplus to \$2 trillion projected deficits. And who is going to pay? In the long run, we are all going to pay, because we either pay in terms of taxes increased on our children in future generations, or major cuts in programs that are important to the American people such as Social Security and Medicare.

In fact, we are going to be paying right now, because when we reduce our obligations to the States, when we do not fulfill our promises under the Leave No Child Behind Act, where this year we are \$9 billion short of what had been committed, we place greater burdens on the States. And the States either have to do one of two things. They either have to increase revenues and taxes, or they have to cut back on programs.

In the State of Maryland, we are seeing dramatic cuts in higher education. Who is paying for those? Students. Their tuition is going up by more than 10 percent. It is simply a tax on students. It is a tax on other people. You cannot get a free lunch. The American people know that. Someone has to pay.

Look at what we are doing to veterans benefits. Sure, we are reducing taxes to the very wealthiest in this country, but what is the result? A dramatic cutback in benefits for veterans.

So what do we do? There was an alternative plan put forward by the Democrats, but no one was allowed an up-or-down vote on that plan here in this body. It called for greater relief for the States so they do not have to either increase taxes back home locally or dramatically cut education and health benefits. It called for a tax break for more middle Americans, increasing the child tax credit, an acceleration of the marriage penalty relief. It called for greater relief for unemployed workers and their families so that they could continue to pay the rent, continue to put food on the table; and that relief has a big impact on the economy. Those are people who need the funds, they have been in work, they lost their jobs through no fault of their own, they are continuing to look for work; and when they get that dollar of help, they go out and spend it in the economy.

Finally, it provides for business tax credits to provide for investment now.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just find that this particular proposal that was adopted today sets our Nation on a reckless course. We need a plan for all

of America that will move our entire Nation forward, and I hope in the days ahead we will do that.

□ 1530

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HENSARLING). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REPUBLICAN ECONOMIC PLAN IS NOT FAIR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, what are the tests that an economic stimulus package should pass in order for us to conclude that it will be successful?

An economic stimulus plan should be fair, should be fast acting, it should be fiscally responsible, like our Democratic plan is. We all know the Republican tax plan does not meet any of these criteria. That is why they have essentially given up claiming that it is a stimulus package.

No matter how many gimmicks the Republican tax cut plan uses, the one thing it cannot hide is the fact that this bill predominantly benefits the very wealthy. Like the first Bush tax cut passed in the summer of 2001, it seems custom designed by and primarily for the benefit of the very wealthiest of Americans.

Today I would like to show how different people fare under the House Republican budget proposal. I guess it all boils down to who you are and what you do. For example, are you a prize fighter or a firefighter? A prize fighter, like Mike Tyson, had reported earnings of \$48 million last year. He stands to gain well over a \$100,000 from the House Republican plan. While a firefighter making an average salary of roughly \$35,000 will save \$332 through the Republican tax cut. \$100,000 is the absolute minimum that millionaires will receive from the tax cut passed earlier today. Most will receive a lot more.

How will other people fare under the Republican tax cut? Well, again, it depends on who you are. Are you the Terminator or an average exterminator? Arnold Schwarzenegger will gain in the hundreds of thousands of dollars from this tax cut while the average exterminator could save about \$452. Yes, it all depends on who you are.

Are you a Texas Ranger or a forest ranger? This year Alex Rodriguez will earn \$23 million playing shortstop for the Texas Rangers while the typical forest ranger will make a little over \$21,000. Alex would scoop up way more than a hundred thousand dollars in tax savings. The forest ranger, he might pocket a little less than \$200.

Well, are you a recording artist or a tattoo artist? Music artist Britney

Spears' tax savings compares quite handsomely with tattoo artist Rene Mezechenko. Rene's tax cut will be around \$300. Britney's will be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. It all depends on who you are.

Are you an executive officer or an executive assistant? Jeffrey Barbakow, CEO of Tenet Healthcare made \$115,600,000 last year, according to the New York Times. Pamela Taylor, an executive assistant, made \$39,000. Pamela's tax cut will be \$452.

You get the picture. Those who need tax relief the most are getting the least. Congress should stop pandering to the rich special interests and get around to the tasks of putting Americans back to work.

Now, I have had a little bit of fun with these pairings, but this is serious business. I represent a lot of people who hold jobs with titles like firefighter, executive assistant, factory worker, store clerk, nurse, and teacher. I also represent a lot of people who have recently lost their jobs in this turbulent economy. None of these folks are calling me on the phone to beg for a dividend tax cut. They are calling me to say put Wisconsin back to work. Put America back to work and do so in a way that is fair, fast acting, and fiscally responsible. That is what the Democratic plan would do.

REPUBLICANS TAX IRRESPONSIBLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today our Chamber threw away any semblance of fiscal responsibility by passing H.R. 2, the Republican tax bill that provides more massive tax cuts, while ignoring the need of the majority of Americans. Two years ago the administration and Congress were looking covetously at a staggering \$5.6 trillion cumulative surplus through 2010. At the time Congress was continually reassured by the administration that we could afford an enormous tax cut, ensure the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, pay down the national debt, fund our domestic priorities and still have a large surplus reserve fund to front anticipated emergencies.

Like many of my colleagues, I cautioned the administration at the time that its budget and enormous tax cut were based on unrealistic surplus projections that would never materialize. Not surprisingly the Congressional Budget Office confirmed that in less than 2 years the 10-year projected surplus has been erased. While portions of this decline are a result of our efforts to defeat terrorism and preserve national security both at home and abroad, the depletion of the surplus to date was largely caused by the administration's fiscally irresponsible policies of 2001.

What do we get for these tax cuts which were supposed to stimulate our